Public Meeting.

In pursuance of the call for a meeting of all those who are opposed to endorsing Mr. Botts' letter, Liberty Hall was well filled with citizens of all parties on Tuesday night.

On motion, Col. C. F. SUTTLE was called to the Chair, and J. M. STEVENS appointed Secretary.

G. D. Wise, esq., moved that a committee of five be appointed to prepare business for the meeting, which motion was carried, and the Chair appointed G. D. Wise, R. M. Smith, Wm. N. McVeigh, T. W. Ashby, and I. Kell. After retiring for a short time, the Chairman of the Committee reported the following resolutions, which were well received, and adopted unanimously without comment:

Resolved, That it is the duty of all good citizens of Virginia to hold the political differences which prevail among themselves, in complete subordination to their common opposition to the so-called Republican party, and to stand ready for a cheerful and cordial Union, and hearty co-operation whenever it shall be necessary, to prevent the success, or the ascendency of that most pernicious and reprehensible organization.

Resolved, That in the present condition of the country, when Republicanism is making extraordinary efforts, and evincing extraordinary determination to grasp the powers of the Federal Government, and when a Republican Governor is shielding an escaped Harper's Ferry murderer, under flimsey technicalities, from arrest and delivery under our just demand, it is particularly incumbent on Virginia and Southern men to waive occasions of strife among themselves, and to cultivate that union of spirit and harmony of feeling and concert of action, which exigencies so grave render necessary for our safety.

Resolved, That an attempt to array us in hostile columns, and teach that we should regard each other with a like repugnance with that felt for the Republican party, however honest their intention, are doing the work of public enemies.

Resolved, That we view the letter of J. M. Botts as a mischievous production, sowing strife, inculcating divisions, and unsealing the waters of bitterness among ourselves, and giving thereby both advantage and encouragement to those who are plotting our ruin.

Resolved, That the people of Alexandria have no sympathy with such aims and such teachings, but true and loyal to the Commonwealth, are ready to unite heart and hand for her defence, whether in council or in camp.

C. E. Stuart, G. D. Wise, and T. W. Ashby, having been loudly called, addressed the meeting, reviewing J. M. Botts' letter, and the resolutions of the meeting held in our city, on Thursday evening, 9th inst., which endorsed it "in the main."

On motion of T. W. Ashby, the city papers were requested to publish the proceedings of this meeting.

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

C. F. SUTTLE, Chairman.

J. M. STEVENS, Secretary.

COMMUNICATED.

Is it not time to look about us and see where we are drifting by the strong current of Party and Sectionalism?—from whence this stream arises, and to what it is likely to tend?

We see certain leaders of a party, who at all times, and on all occasions, traduce and villify for their own end some of the most politically honest and upright men in our country, and apply to and attempt to stamp upon them the epithet of abolitionist, in the broad and disgusting sense, as applied to Phillips, Garrison and others of that school. The setting of a slave free, by his master, even, in one sense, by these people, is *abolition;* although it is the practice daily of some of our most generous, as well as true hearted masters and slave owners, who act as the influence of their nature dictates, but do not set up a creed for the public approval; nor do they care for the traduction of any party, of their motives. But if abolitionism should ever become a principle for general action, at whose door should this dire evil be placed? I say, to some of the leaders of the Democratic party, who give aid and comfort to the abolitionists? Those who tell the North that Rives, Summers, Goggin, and others of a noble galaxy of patriots, are *with them.* While Summers, as an *abolitionist,* in our midst, receives thousands of votes in this State for Governor, and the Democratic party echo it throughout the North,—what abolitionist but would draw comfort from this fact? And yet these same shouters about abolitionism voted to elect as Governor a gentleman giving his name and sanction to the Ruffner pamphlet! I say nothing about recent proceedings in the County of Clarke.

The thief who would run with the crowd and cry "stop thief," is not more cunning than the leaders and politicians who pursue this course.

Look back at the internal improvement policy of these politicians. The Whigs, according to their doctrines, sinking the country in ruin by taxes to uphold this *nefarious* principle; and yet at *this day,* under their control, you can see in the reckless expenditure for this purpose, a dark future ahead! The only hope we have is that a few are still left to tell the Legislature there is a limit to every good—that though they filched from the Whig party a principle good in itself, they are yet overleaping prudence and despising sound judgment.

Who is dividing our glorious Union into sectionalism? The ultra leaders of the Democratic party. Their speeches are, too often, purely sectional, not *national.* Their cry is all "nigger"—no white. I profess to have a deep interest in our Old Dominion, to revere and love her institutions, but I can never consent to have my claims as a freeman entirely swallowed up by this "nigger" question: though I will go as far as any one in the protection and defence of my native State from all aggressions.

Must we suffer for postal facilities and for other matters affecting the general interest, and the public weal, and have the valuable time of Congress taken up entirely, to forward the Presidential prospects of Wise, Douglas, or any other man, by everlasting threadbare sectional slang whanging?—A bad feeling to be engendered even in the South, and the mouths of citizens stopped because their sentiments do not accord with those professed by men who make such vast pretensions to slavery protection, and never owned a slave in their lives? Should even an Ex-Governor stoop to mix in this hue and cry, and regret that he had lost the only power he ever possessed, to reach a far seeing, plain spoken, and fearless citizen of the Commonwealth?

Gov. Letcher does not seem to be of the same opinion; as that citizen still roams at large, a free, and independent man, however honest men may disagree about the correctness of his opinions.

The effort to bind the South *as a section* to any *political* party, is only to commit us to a *Democratic* policy: to strengthen, if possible, a party which otherwise would tumble into ruins; and which, as I have shown, has not looked, as to its own candidates, to antecedents on this slavery question; and I would not vouch that when the power was conferred upon them,—the spoils fairly within their grasp—that the very calamities we now so fear, may not be hastened by some of this very party!

Under the present state of politics, we want a party fearless of the bullying or villifications of their opponents; who will see only the Union of the *whole* with the protection of the rights of *each;* who will lose sight of the various *sectional* issues of the day, and the petty squabbles of party, and look only to the good of the WHOLE COUNTRY.

UNIONIST.

WANTED.—The advertiser, a citizen of this place, wishes to purchase a middle aged, or elderly SERVANT MAN, as a Dining Room and House Servant—not to be carried out of this town. Enquire at this office. feb 16—1w*

LOCAL ITEMS.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL LAWS ON THE ALEXANDRIA AND WASHINGTON RAILROAD.—The following is the report submitted to the city Council, on Tuesday night, by the Committee on General Laws, on the proposition to permit the Alexandria and Washington Railroad Company, to construct a branch of their road through the city, to a point near the Depot of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad:

To the City Council of Alexandria:

The undersigned, members of the Committee of General Laws, to whom was referred the communication of James S. French, President of the Alexandria and Washington Railroad Company, and an act in reference to the "Washington and Alexandria Railroad," together with a resolution directing said Committee to enquire into the expediency of passing a bill permitting the further extension of Railroads through the streets of the city, beg leave to submit the following views in relation thereto.

The communication referred to renews the application on behalf of the Alexandria and Washington Railroad Company, for permission to extend a branch of their road from some point on their main line, to or near the depot of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, subject to such restrictions as the City Council may impose.

It is urged that this extension is necessary, in order to give greater facilities to the travelling public, and is rendered the more important in consequence of the completion of the Orange and Alexandria road to Lynchburg. The petitioners do not desire to change in any way their present line for local travel, but merely to use the proposed branch in running in connection with the passenger trains on the Orange Road.

The act proposed for the action of Council, if adopted, would confer upon said Company rights and privileges not asked for in the communication. The latter proposes to retain the present accommodations for the local travel, but the act proposes a change in the location of the depot of said Company, to a point different from that now occupied. The first section of the act provides amongst other things, "that the depot of said company *for their passenger and burden cars, locomotives,* &c., be established at some point west of Henry and north of Duke street." The communication prays the granting of one privilege, and disclaims a desire to change the present arrangement for local travel, yet the bill proposes to establish their depot, at a place several squares from where it is now located. The bill is therefore quite objectionable, in the fact that it proposes and authorizes changes in the present arrangements of the company, that are not contemplated or asked for in the communication. We are unable to account for the manifest difference between the grant asked for, and that proposed by the bill, except on the hypothesis that the company have not been instrumental in presenting the bill, or that their wants have largely increased since the date of their communication. To authorize the change in the location of the depot of said company from the position in which the people of the city placed it in 1855, unasked by the company itself, would be the assumption of a power, against the expressed wish of our constituents; and until the citizens manifest a desire to change the location of said depot, it is fair to presume, that they prefer its present location.

The act, with a few verbal amendments, in no wise affecting its provisions, is therefore reported to the city council for their action.

The communication asks for important privileges, and for valuable rights to this company, the granting of which, cannot but be of the deepest importance to our city.

To acquire private property for such a purpose, and to such an extent on the proposed branch road, would involve the expenditure of many thousands of dollars; yet it is proposed that the city of Alexandria shall confer on a company in which she has no interest whatever, this important and valuable privilege for the mere pertinacity with which they pursue it, and without compensation either to the city of Alexandria, or to individuals whose private property may be seriously affected by it.

In 1855, when this road was admitted within the corporate limits, there was a very respectable majority against its admission at all; and out of 135 votes, there were but 12, in favor of allowing the location as far as Alfred street, 123 for Columbus street, and 180 for the present location. In 1857, a majority of 242 out of 544 voters opposed and defeated the connection of this road with the Orange road. With such results, it is in our opinion manifestly idle to again submit an almost identical proposition to the people of this city.—It will be full time to legislate on this subject, when any considerable number of our constituents ask for or require it.

If the measure were in our opinion, calculated in any degree, to advance the interests or the prosperity of Alexandria, we might then yield a doubting assent to its consummation. But in the absence of such an inducement, we cannot see how the city of Alexandria can, with any claim to justice, be called on or be expected, to sanction a scheme which cannot advance, whilst it may impair the interests, and business welfare of our city.

To bring our city within more easy access to the people of Virginia, who had for years traded with us, as well as with the hope of adding largely to that class, the citizens of Alexandria, a few years ago, with the corporate authorities, subscribed largely over half a million of dollars, to aid in the construction of two important railroads leading from their city into the interior of the State. It was the unanimous opinion of our people that the construction of two such roads, terminating here, would restore to Alexandria her long lost prosperity. Her last hope was centered on these improvements, and to their aid she cheerfully gave, (by the assumption of a heavy burden) her full share of assistance. That the hoped for result has been partially attained, let the large portion of our population who never knew the grass grown streets of our city, attest. That we are reaping our hoped for reward, let the many respectable buildings, which have supplanted the old rookeries, that once adorned our business centre, bear testimony. In making subscriptions to these improvements, the citizens of Alexandria were alone prompted by a desire to add to the prosperity and business importance of the city. This was their single and only purpose, and as our purpose then was, so should our single object now be, so to shape our legislation as to secure that result. If this is not our cherished purpose and constant aim, and especially if we allow others to devise our plans and to shape our destiny, Alexandria may soon be distanced in the race to commercial or mercantile importance.

Then, what is this scheme to result in? Certainly in much good to the Company applying; but how does it affect our city? It is virtually, if not actually, to change the terminus of the roads now here, to other points.

Had Alexandria, in the year 1849 or 1850, or at any other time, been asked to subscribe of her means to make a Railroad from the Long Bridge, or from Washington city, through her streets, and extending into Virginia, she would have spurned the proposition. And yet, this is about the sum and substance of the proposition now pending. We are asked by this Company to give them the use of our streets—for what purpose? Simply, that the trade and travel of the Orange road may be landed with greater facility at the south end of the Long Bridge, two miles from the Pennsylvania avenue, with the hope (no doubt indulged by the Company) that at some very indefinite period they may cross the bridge to the city of Washington. How is Alexandria interested in affording such facilities? What has she to gain by granting them? Surely nothing. And if we gain nothing by granting, and lose nothing by refusing, then why divert our streets from their legitimate use for so barren a result? or, why incur the hazard of injury, in accomplishing that which promises no benefit in return?

We are told in the memorial that the through travel now passes through our city, and this is urged as an inducement for the grant. True, the through travellers do pass through our city, and to this no one objects. We would not, were it in our power to do so, put a straw in their way. But does this fact require at our hands the grant of greater facilities? They enjoy the same facilities for going North, South, East, or West, that our own citizens enjoy, and surely they cannot, in justice, demand that Alexandria should jeopardize important interests for their sole and especial benefit. Why should Washington city dig up her streets and devote them to Railroad purposes for the sole purpose of facilitating Alexandrians and others to Baltimore? Or, why should Richmond be called on to afford facilities to enable the public *going through,* to reach the Petersburg depot? The same reasons that have influenced these and other places, influence Alexandria; and the same interests that govern Alexandria, control Petersburg, Richmond, Lynchburg, Washington, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Detroit, Milwaukie, Chicago, Cincinnati, and Baltimore.

Baltimore, it is true, connects by rail the Baltimore & Ohio and the Philadelphia road, and this is the only exception, and for which potent reasons exist. But if the traveller would go North or West, by the rival of the Baltimore & Ohio and Philadelphia road, he must find the best conveyance he can from Camden, to Calvert street station; and should the southern tourist be hastening home from Niagara, via the "Northern Central," he finds that no through tickets are sold beyond Baltimore, and that on arriving there in the evening, he is not only compelled to "take a bus," but also rooms for the night.

Alexandria has granted to the Orange Company the use of her streets: their rails are now, and have been for years, laid from the western limits of the city to the river, and from thence to the northern extremity of Union street. It was expected that for the purposes of carrying trade and travel beyond this point, the river would have afforded every desired accommodation. That this means of communication has not been improved, is surely no fault of ours. From Alexandria to Washington, a distance of scarcely six miles, and occupying from twenty to thirty minutes by steam boat was never until recently, believed to present a very serious obstacle to the comfortable transmission of passengers. Nor can we now believe, that a properly constructed steamer could fail to afford every reasonable facility. We are at a loss to know, why the Potomac may not be as readily crossed or navigated, as the Susquehanna, Delaware, Ohio, Mississippi, or the Hudson rivers. And as the Virginia roads have long since reached the west bank of the Potomac, it only remains for the Maryland road to make the same approach to the east bank, and the connecting link becomes at once an easy and natural one.

If, then, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad will make a branch to the Potomac, opposite or near Alexandria, and the present means be properly employed and improved, every desired facility will be afforded the through travel, and passengers will avoid as well the ride through our streets, as the mud of "Jackson City."

When we are told, therefore, that Alexandria is throwing obstacles in the way of through travel, in refusing to give up the use of her streets, may we not point for an answer to the unemployed and unimproved means at the command of those who profit by such travel. Alexandria does not desire to impede or prevent through travel. She interposes no obstacles to prevent, and will doubtless refuse to spend money, or yield up important privileges to facilitate it. She has no more interest in the welfare of the through traveller, than he has in her welfare—both doubtless act from interested motives, and neither may fairly condemn the action of the other.

With a proper location of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad depot, and the employment of the proper means, we are quite certain that the Potomac river will afford the same facilities for the transmission of passengers as are now enjoyed at the Susquehanna, and elsewhere.

We deem it not improper, at this time, to advert to the fact, that the financial condition of this Company is such as to make it a question, whether or not they could, even with a proper disposition to do so, comply with the terms of the proposed act. We regret that we have to say, that the former contract between this Company and the City authorities has not, as yet, been complied with, on the part of the Company.

By the act of the City Council, passed 22d of January, 1856, the Company was permitted to occupy St. Asaph street, as far south as Princess street, upon certain terms and conditions. Amongst them, was the proviso, that "said Company should erect a suitable and comfortable depot, of *brick,* on said street." Four years have passed away, but this condition remains unperformed.

If the proposed act were passed, and the track laid down in accordance therewith, and the necessity should arise for removing it, and restoring the streets as contemplated by the act, it would involve the expenditure of considerable money. And although the Company may be able to raise the means for laying down the track, it may, we think, be well questioned, whether they could borrow the money to pay for taking it up and restoring the streets.

Should this contingency arise, we doubt not but the whole expense would have to be incurred by the City Council.

But, how is Alexandria to be affected by such a connection, and what is to be the result in the future? The ultimate purpose undoubtedly is, to connect by rail the Orange & Alexandria with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad at Washington. And we shall presently show the views that others take of such a connection.

How Alexandria would be affected, may best be shown by a few practical examples:

The town of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, has a harbor second to none on the seaboard; easy of access, and a current sufficient to keep it free from ice during the coldest weather in winter. It is connected by Railroad with Concord, Portland, and Boston—being 60 miles from the latter city. It possesses all the requisites of a commercial city, and once enjoyed and sustained a large commercial business. Why, then, has its commerce so dwindled away, as that Congress should doubt the propriety of giving her a new Custom House? Why have its imports fallen off, until they have become so insignificant as scarcely to merit notice? We understand, from very fair authority, that the principal cause, is the direct and *continuous* Railroad connection with Boston. Merchandize is carried from points *beyond* Portsmouth to *Boston,* at lower rates *than to Portsmouth,* and Portsmouth has become a *way station.* Her docks and warehouses, which but a few years ago were busy with the hum of business, are, we are told, now forsaken, and stand as monuments to her once commercial prosperity—"*Boston has swallowed her up.*"

Wilmington, Delaware, was once a thriving commercial city, but she has no commerce now. Alas! "*Philadelphia has swallowed her up.*"

Cumberland, though not a seaport, was, with the terminus of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, a notoriously flourishing place, where fortunes were realized in the rise of property. The Railroad was completed to Wheeling. Merchandise is carried as low, if not lower, from Wheeling to Baltimore, than to Cumberland, and "*Baltimore has swallowed her up.*"

These are a few instances of "swallowed up cities," and if the members of Council will read the humorous speech of Senator Thompson, of Kentucky, delivered in the Senate of the United States, last winter, they will there see many other striking examples. Make this connection, and freight will be carried from Lynchburg to Baltimore, as low, if not lower, than to Alexandria, and thus will "*Baltimore swallow Alexandria up.*" But even Baltimore herself, with her through connection with Philadelphia, is by no means content. Under discriminating freight lists, merchandise, in spite of her capital and enterprise, is passing through to the Delaware, and her merchants are now moving, lest "*Philadelphia may swallow her up.*"

But how is this connection viewed by others, who are deeply interested in effecting it?

The President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, in a recent annual report, says:—"The early completion of important lines *in the vicinity of Washington,* (he don't even name Alexandria,) which will open a direct communication with the principal Southern cities, has caused the Board to look with anxiety to arrangements for perfecting connections between the Washington Branch and its *Southern associates,* in order thus to complete this great national route. The tedious and expensive transfer that has heretofore existed, has caused great annoyance to the immense travel using this line. As the entire country is interested in this improvement, the Board trust the requisite power for its accomplishment may be granted during the next session of Congress. If suitable and economical *transit for freight* and passengers be secured, it is believed that important results, INCREASING THE COMMERCIAL PROSPERITY OF BALTIMORE, AND THE DISTRICT CITIES, will be realized." How truly he might have added—at the expense of the city "*in the vicinity of Washington.*"

It is quite evident, from the foregoing extract from the report of Mr. Garrett, that he, and the Company of which he is the head, are "*anxious*" that "suitable arrangements" shall be made with the Orange road, for the "*economical transit for freight*" to his road. What he means by the term "economical transit of freight," is, doubtless, that there shall be such arrangements with the Orange road, as will secure the transit of freight from one road to the other, without the breaking of bulk in this city. This would, unquestionably, be the most "*economical arrangement*" he could make, so far as his road is concerned. But, how would it affect the "vicinity of Washington"—viz: Alexandria? It needs no argument to show that under such an "economical arrangement," Baltimore would be just what Mr. Garrett is striving to make her—the terminus of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad. But this anxiety evinced by Mr. Garrett, may be found expressed in perhaps stronger terms, in the report of Mr. Wm. Prescott Smith, the Master of Transportation of the Baltimore & Ohio road. He says:

"Strong evidence has been given us, during the past year, of the rapidly growing necessity for an improved connection at Washington with the lines running through Eastern and Central Virginia, and reaching to the adjoining Southern States. Independently of the long obvious need of some such arrangement for the great mass of travel from Washington to the South, there is much inconvenience felt by the people of Washington, as well as by the *mercantile interests of Baltimore,* for the want of a close and reliable Railroad connexion through the former city. While the transfer of passengers and their baggage, and the mails, may be made between the present station at Washington and the lines at Alexandria and Aquia Creek, as heretofore, with an endurable degree of risk, inconvenience, and loss of time, it is almost impracticable to undertake *any extended freight movement,* by the same imperfect means. The result is, that the business of Washington and Alexandria, as well as Baltimore, is seriously embarrassed, and no efforts are likely to increase it much, until this barrier is removed, and a *proper connexion* is made either through or around the city of Washington."

Mr. Smith, it is plainly to be seen, "goes in" "for an extended freight movement" with the Orange Road, and if possible, would run through both Washington and Alexandria, in order to prevent the "present inconvenience felt by the mercantile interests of Baltimore." It is manifestly the settled purpose of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, at the sacrifice of the interests of others, to give to Baltimore and other places, the trade which our Virginia Roads may supply. We respectfully suggest that the Virginia Roads were built for no such purpose, and the consummation of the scheme would be at war not only with the policy, but with the true interests of our State, and especially with the sound policy and true interests of Alexandria.

The anxiety with which Messrs. Garrett & Smith seek to deprive us of the advantages which we cannot fail to derive from the position we occupy at the terminus of our Virginia Roads, and the determination with which this object is to be pursued, is only equalled by the magnitude and importance of the results which are to flow from its consummation. The value of the prize sought to be thus obtained, and the determination with which it is to be pursued, is well expressed in a recent article in the Baltimore American, republished in the Alexandria Gazette of the 20th of January. The following are extracts from said article, and will speak for themselves:

"The extension of the Orange and Alexandria railroad from Charlottesville to Lynchburg, may be said to be finished. No formal announcement of the completion of this important link in the Great Southwestern system of railways, extending from Portland to New Orleans, has been made to the public, nor are the cars now running further than Charlottsville, but the work yet to be done at Lynchburg is so trifling, and the opening of the road to through travel is so near at hand, that it may not be amiss to anticipate an event of the first magnitude to the commercial interests of Baltimore, and to give timely utterance to the considerations of a practical nature which such an event necessarily suggests. We are of opinion that the merchants and manufacturers of Baltimore, are far from being alive to the immense value of this road as an avenue of business, and more particularly as the most direct and the only complete channel for the vast bulk of import trade to a wide and fertile country, which was once tributary to our city, and may again become so *by prompt, energetic, and sagacious management.*"

The article goes on to speak of the great magnitude of the trade which our Virginia roads will command, and proceeds in the following strain:—

"The trade, which had once been ours and which all the inducements of long acquaintance and warm friendship between our merchants and those of Tennessee, Virginia, Alabama, &c., could not retain to us, was, as it were, compelled to the ports of Savannah and Charleston; and where the produce went, thither of course, the factors followed and purchased their goods. It was under these circumstances that it became imperative upon Baltimore to throw out the mighty arm of the Baltimore and Ohio road, which embraces and brings to our wharves the commodities of countries as extensive and even more populous and productive than those from which we had been cut off, by the enterprise of the Georgians and South Carolinians.

But the barrier interposed between Baltimore and the Southwest, has been annihilated *without cost or inconvenience to her,* and the road is once more open to the rich traffic we once enjoyed.—The East Tennessee, the Virginia and Tennessee, and the Lynchburg and Alexandria Railroads, with their connections, afford to Baltimore a cheap, speedy, and secure transit to the regions whose trade belonged to us in the days when steam had not superseded horse power, and when wagons ran in place of cars. *By proper effort on the part of her citizens, the valuable Southwest trade of former years, now quadrupled in quantity, may be regained. Will that effort be made?*"

"The completion of the Charlottesville extension reduces the distance from Washington to New Orleans to 1195 miles. In two years from this date, the finishing of the N. E. & S. W. Alabama road, with the transverse road from Meridien to Jackson (if we mistake not) will occasion a further reduction of 150 miles—making the distance from Washington to New Orleans, only 1,045 miles. The shortness of this route, it being almost an air line—its speed, safety, and convenience, and the immense travel it must obtain, point it out unmistakably as the channel through which Baltimore, can if she choose, once more pour the stream of her imports upon the Southwest. Three millions of people already rich and destined to become richer every year, may be supplied with the untold luxuries and necessities of modern civilized life, through this channel. *A little foresight and a little energy will restore to Baltimore the tributary provinces which she once owned, and which of right belong to her.* Duty, interest, ambition, every incentive that should excite a commercial people, urge us to exhibit this foresight, and practice this energy."

"Space does not permit us to dwell upon this topic, vast as it is its importance, nor do we deem it becoming to impose our opinions as to the duty of Baltimore upon a public whose comprehensive sagacity and business tact have never been called in question. Our task is ended in calling attention to a few facts which in the pressure of other affairs our merchants may have overlooked. On one point, however, there cannot be two opinions.—The duty of Baltimore, as connected with the opening of a new avenue to an old region of trade, is to facilitate the access of the traders and their products, by every means in her power. Hence there can be no conflict of sentiments with regard to the propriety of instantly and earnestly urging upon or Representatives in Congress the imperative obligation of *securing at once a connection between the Alexandria road and the Washington branch of the Baltimore and Ohio road. French's road* already extends from Alexandria, to a point opposite the city of Washington, but the connection is broken at Alexandria, and a railroad bridge is yet to be built across the Potomac. *These two interruptions should be done away with immediately. French's road should become part and parcel of the Alexandria road, the cars of which should run through without a single break from Lynchburg into the depot near the Capitol.* This accomplished, Baltimore again becomes the commercial *entrepot* of the Great Southwest, *in spite of the opposition of the tide-water cities of Virginia, and the end will prove that the Alexandria and Lynchburg road will be no whit inferior, in point of importance to the material interests of Baltimore, to the Baltimore and Ohio road of which she is justly so proud.*"

The proposition now pending is but the beginning of the scheme which has been devised to make "French's road" a part and parcel of the "Alexandria road," and which it is promised, will make Baltimore "again the commercial *entrepot* of the great Southwest, in spite of the opposition of the tide water cities of Virginia." It only remains to be seen whether the City Council of Alexandria, by passing this bill, will give "that little foresight and energy" to Baltimore, which will, without "*cost or inconvenience" to her,* restore to her the "*tributary provinces*" which she claims to have "*once owned,*" and which she now claims, of right belongs to her.

If Alexandria is prepared to yield up without a struggle and without consideration, the advantages which nature and her own sacrifices have given her, and to become a mere "way station" on this "great national route," then let us not hesitate to grant to others the right they pray for, and thus to control our destiny.

In conclusion, it may not be improper to suggest, a want of power in the city council even with the consent of a majority of the people to divert our streets from their legitimate uses. It is fair to presume that the owners of property on our streets have some interest in the legitimate use of a street on which their property is situated. The streets it is true have been dedicated to the public, and the public are represented by the city council, but we are at a loss to perceive what right, legal or moral, the public have directly, or through the agency of the city council, to divert the streets from their legitimate uses. It may therefore be well questioned, whether the city council can, without the consent of the property holders on a street, divert it from the purposes for which it was dedicated, and authorize its use for Railroad purposes. The statute law of our state, provides that no company shall occupy with its works the streets of a town until the corporate authorities of the town shall have assented thereto." But this claim can hardly be extended by construction, to the giving of omnipotent power over the streets to the corporate authorities. It does not declare that "corporate authorities" shall have the power to grant the use of the streets, but simply enables the authorities to prevent such use by withholding their assent. The assent of the corporate authorities does not confer a right, but is simply necessary to the exercise of a right which may have been acquired. When proper compensation is made to the owners of private property which may be affected by the use of a street for Railroad purposes, then the public is protected in the power given the corporate authorities to grant or refuse the exercise of the privilege. That the law contemplates a consent from those whose property is situated on a street to be used for Railroad purposes, it is only necessary to advert to the fact, that in the chapter of the code which authorizes the corporate authorities to assent to the use of a street, we find the provision, "That no company shall under any of the provisions of that chapter, invade the dwelling house of any free person or *any space within sixty feet thereof* without the consent of the owner."

If therefore, it be claimed that the assent of the City Council can confer the right so to use the streets, is it not at least subject to the provision of the law just quoted? And if we are right in this view, would it not be time enough to give our assent, when the company shall have obtained the consent of the owners of property on the streets they propose to occupy? And may not the exercise of the grant by the City Council, without such assent, entail upon many of our citizens, and even the corporation itself, an almost endless chain of expensive litigation, with a company that seems to be totally unable to respond to the claims of their creditors.

In view of the foregoing, and many other reasons that might be offered, we respectfully recommend that the prayer of the petitioners be refused, and that the proposed act be not passed. Respectfully submitted.

I. LOUIS KINZER,
S. F. BEACH,
WM. H. FOWLE.

FIREMEN'S LECTURE.—The Second Lecture of the Friendship Course of the lectures to firemen, was delivered at the Lecture room of the M. E. Church, South, Washington street, last night.

Notwithstanding the extremely inclement weather, the attendance was large, and comprised all the fire companies of the city.

The exercises were opened by prayer by the Rev. Mr. Blount, of the M. E. Church, South. The lecturer, R. L. Carne, jr., esq., handled his theme "The Life and Times of Captain John Smith," in a manner which won the attention of the audience, and reflected much credit upon the lecturer. The Benediction by Rev. Mr. Blount, closed the interesting exercises.

Previous to the Lecture, the fire companies assembled at the Friendship Engine House, and proceeded to the Church. The third lecture of the course will be delivered in the course of a few weeks by William H. Fowle, esq.

THE EXCITEMENT IN UPPER MARLBORO'.—The rumors of an affray between a young man named Boyle and a negro man near Upper Marlboro, were more highly colored than the facts warranted. From the Marlboro paper we learn that there was a difficulty between the negro and some white boys, in which young Boyle interfered, when he was attacked by the negro and severely cut.—The negro was arrested the same night, and lodged in jail. Mr. Boyle's wounds were promptly dressed and he is doing well.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.—We regret to learn that the fine dwelling house upon the farm formerly belonging to the late William P. Brinham, but now owned by the Misses Daingerfield, was totally destroyed by fire on the night of the 29th ultimo. There was no one living in the house at the time of the fire, but an old negro man, who had charge of the premises. It is supposed the fire originated by a hog going into the kitchen in the absence of the old man, and rooting the fire out on the floor. We believe there was no insurance on the property.—*Marlboro' Planter's Advocate.*

DONATIONS TO THE SOUP HOUSE.—Mr. Whittington, Superintendent of the Soup House, acknowledges the following additional contributions: From Markham Station, $10; a friend, $2; Capt. E. Bacon, $3. From now until late in March, the weather is generally as inclement and trying as during the winter months, and it is hoped that the Soup House will not be closed until mild weather sets in regularly, and labor is in greater demand.

OTTERS KILLED.—GOOD SHOOTING.—We were shown yesterday by Mr. B. F. Pitts, the skins of two Otters killed by him at one shot, on Monday last, at Four Mile Run, near this place. These skins measure four feet two inches in length from nose to tip of tail. The gun used was a small bird gun, taking only about an ounce at a charge, and the shot with which it was loaded were Nos. 4 and 5.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.—The observance of St. Valentine's Day in this city, was not so general as was the case many years ago. Comparatively few missives passed through the post office. The olden custom of the day, in itself beautiful and becoming, has lately degenerated, in many instances, into a custom of sending miserable and offensive characters, and probably now is "more honored in the breach than in the observance."

SOUTHERN MAIL.—The Aquia Creek steamer passed up yesterday at an earlier hour than usual, and the mail carrier not being on the wharf when she arrived, the mail was taken on to Washington, and brought down last night with the Northern mail. By the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, we received a copy of the Richmond Dispatch.

A CHARGE.—It is publicly charged in the newspapers, that it was a Mr. Blake, a student of the Episcopal Seminary near this place, who was concerned in the scene lately enacted in Beechers church, in New York, in reference to the purchase of a slave girl belonging to some one in Washington, which has been heretofore noticed in this paper.

The appointment of Col. Geo. W. Hughes, to fill a vacancy in the House committee for the District of Columbia, meets with universal favor. No better selection could have been made, for he is well acquainted with Washington, and will doubtless use his best exertions to promote her interests.

On Monday evening, Mr. A. T. Bledsoe, of the University of Virginia, delivered at the Smithsonian Institution, an interesting Lecture on the "Social Destiny of Man," being the first of a series of lectures he has prepared on the same subject.

R. M. HETERICK has been elected Clerk of the Circuit and County Courts of Rappahannock County. Mr. Heterick's opponent was Mr. R. F. White. The vote stood, Heterick 532, White 397.

STORM.—A North East storm commenced on Tuesday night last, accompanied with rain, snow and hail. It lasted until about 6 o'clock last night.

APPOINTMENT.—Mr. Isaac Entwisle, formerly of this city, has been re-appointed principal Engineer, in charge of the heating apparatus of the House of Representatives.

Large quantities of fine Rock Fish are now being caught in the Potomac and carried to Washington.

A movement is to made in Georgetown, D. C., in favor of a retrocession of that place to the State of Maryland.

☞ All who intend going to Richmond to attend the Whig Convention, are requested to leave their names at the Gazette Office, in order that arrangements may be made for round trip tickets. feb 16—3t

☞ JAMES P. COLEMAN respectfully presents himself to the Voters of Alexandria for re-election to the office of MEASURER OF WOOD AND BARK, at the approaching election, and hopes his past course will be sufficient commendation to insure your support. feb 16—dtE

☞ NOTICE.—I offer myself as a candidate for the office of Superintendent of Police, and pledge myself, if elected, to discharge faithfully the duties imposed upon me.
feb 16—3t SAMUEL BEACH.

☞ INSPECTOR OF LUMBER.—I respectfully announce myself a candidate for the above office, and solicit the support of my fellow-citizens.
feb 16—eo3t* CHARLES R. GRIMES.

NAILS.—1000 kegs best quality for sale by
feb 14 WHEAT & BRO.

CODFISH.—2,000 lbs. CODFISH, for sale by
feb 4 J. N. HARPER & CO.

COMMERCIAL.

PRICES OF PRODUCE IN ALEXANDRIA.
FROM CARS, VESSELS, AND WAGONS, (YESTERDAY.)

FLOUR, Super	$5 25	@	$5 37½
Do Extra	5 75	@	5 87½
Do Family	6 50	@	7 50
WHEAT, White	1 30	@	1 35
Do Red	1 20	@	1 26
CORN, White	0 75	@	0 00
Do Mixed	0 75	@	0 80
Do Yellow	0 74	@	0 75
CORN MEAL, ₱ bushel	0 78	@	0 80
OATS	0 37½	@	0 38
RYE	0 80	@	0 00
CLOVER SEED, (retail)	6 00	@	6 25
TIMOTHY SEED	2 50	@	3 00
FLAXSEED	1 35	@	1 40
SUMAC, ₱ hundred	1 25	@	0 00
PLASTER, Lump, retail, delivered on Cars	4 50	@	4 75
Do Ground do	6 50	@	7 00
GUANO, Peruvian	58 00	@	00 00
Do Elide	47 50	@	00 00
SALT, Fine	2 00	@	2 25
Do Ground Alum	1 25	@	0 00
BUTTER, Roll, ₱ lb	0 18	@	0 20
Do Firkin	0 12	@	0 14
BACON, Hog Round	0 10	@	0 10
PORK	7 00	@	7 50
LARD, in Kegs	0 10	@	0 11
WHITE BEANS	1 30	@	1 40
BLACK-EYED PEAS	1 25	@	0 00
BROOM CORN ₱ 100 lbs	4 00	@	7 00
HAY ₱ 100 lbs	0 62	@	0 75
WOOL, common unwashed	0 25	@	0 27
Do. do. washed	0 35	@	0 38
Do. Merino unwashed	0 30	@	0 35
Do. do. washed	0 45	@	0 55

REMARKS.—The market is quiet, and the figures given in our table above, require no alteration. In Flour, the transactions are light, and the supply moderate. There were sales of Wheat on 'Change at 134@135c for white, of fair quality, and 125@126c. for fair to good red. The receipts are light. In Corn, the transactions are limited, with sales at 75@76c. for white. Rye and Oats are quiet, with small offerings. Groceries and Provisions are firm, but we hear of no change in prices. Wool is quiet and unchanged. Business yesterday was quiet.

The Markets.

BALTIMORE, Feb. 15.—Flour closed dull but steady; Howard street and Ohio held at $5.37.—Wheat closed firm; sales of 3,000 bush.; red 129@130c.; white 135@150c. Corn closed active and steady; yellow 70@73c.; white 69@72c. Provisions closed firm, with small sales. Pork heavy; mess $18. Whiskey quiet at 25c.

NEW YORK, Feb. 15.—Cotton closed dull; sales of 1,000 bales. Flour closed dull; sales of 6,500 bbls.; State $5.00@$5.10; Ohio $5.70@$5.95; Southern $5.40@$5.70. Wheat closed heavy; sales of 6,500 bush.; Canada white 138c. Corn closed firm; sales of 18,000 bush. Pork closed quiet; mess $18.50; prime $12.37@$12.50; new $14.50. Lard closed firm. Whiskey closed lower and more active at 24½c. Sugar closed firm; Orleans by auction 7¼@7¾. Coffee closed firm; sales of 1200 bags at 12½c. Molasses closed steady at 46½, and by auction at 33½@45½c.